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News release

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Community planning thriving in West Lothian and can achieve more

West Lothian Community Planning Partnership (CPP) has considerable strengths built up over years of effective joint working which has delivered real benefits to local communities.

A report published today for the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland says the partnership has made good progress in improving outcomes for people living in West Lothian, especially in relation to the economy, community safety and aspects of health and wellbeing.

The collaborative culture has been supported by centres where services from different agencies are all brought together on one site. The CPP has good information on how it is performing and has its own dedicated team which supports the partnership effectively.

The 15 partners are responsible for more than £1bn annual spending in West Lothian and have agreed an ambitious vision for the area which sets out fresh challenges for the future. The CPP now needs to raise its game further to meet them - through more effective leadership and scrutiny, challenging the contributions made by partners, and improving how it reports back to local people.

Douglas Sinclair, chair of the Accounts Commission, said: "West Lothian has set a high standard in community planning. There is much that other partnerships across Scotland can learn from it.

"It should now use the base of its own high standards to improve further in the years ahead, particularly to get a better match between national and its local priorities."

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Notes to editors

1. Community Planning Partnerships were established more than a decade ago to bring together councils, health boards and other agencies to agree and implement plans for tackling key problems in their areas.
2. This report has been prepared by the Controller of Audit (for the Accounts Commission) and the Auditor General. It is one of five CPP reports this year, following those on Glasgow, Falkirk and Moray. The fifth, on Orkney CPP, is due to be published next month followed by an overview report.
3. The Accounts Commission is the public spending watchdog for local government. It holds councils and various joint boards and committees in Scotland to account and help them improve. It operates impartially and independently of councils and of the Scottish Government, and meets and reports in public.
4. Audit Scotland is a statutory body set up in April 2000, under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act, 2000. It provides services to the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission for Scotland.